



Keeping Your Grandchildren Safe

Grandparents,

It may have been a while since you had little ones around. A few things have changed...for the safety of children. This checklist is to help you find things that may be unsafe in your home or automobile.

Grandchild's sleeping area:

If you are purchasing a new crib, look for the certification seal showing that it meets the safety guidelines of the US Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC). New crib standards were issued by the CPSC in December, 2010. Cribs meeting these new standards were available for purchase on June 28, 2011. Contact CPSC at (800) 638-2772 or www.cpsc.gov/cribs for more details.

If you are using an older crib, check it against the guidelines below. CPS staff recommends that you not use a crib that is more than 10 years old. If it does not meet the standards, destroy it and replace it with a safe one.

A safe crib has:

- Been assembled correctly according to manufacturer's instructions.
- No missing, loose, broken or improperly installed screws, brackets or other hardware.
- No more than 2 3/8 inches between crib slats. (Hint: If a soda can is able to pass through the slats, the slats are more than 2 3/8 inches apart).
- A firm, snug fitting mattress so the baby cannot get trapped between the mattress and the side of the crib.
- No fluffy blankets, comforters, pillows or stuffed animals that could trap the baby and suffocate him.
- No corner posts over 1/16 inch above the end panels (unless they are over 16 inches high for a canopy). A baby's head can get trapped otherwise.
- No cracked or peeling paint.
- No lead-based paint.
- No splinters or rough edges.
- No split or chipping plastic or vinyl.
- No cut out designs in the headboard or footboard.

Place your grandchild on his back to sleep unless directed otherwise by the child's health care provider.

Remember, as the baby grows, the crib may need some adjusting (e.g. lower the mattress, move away from blinds, etc.).

Avoid using cribs with drop-sides, or contact the crib's manufacture for an immobilizer. An immobilizer can only be used on cribs that are 10 years old or newer.

If you do not have a crib:

- Place a thin blanket or quilt on the floor in a safe sleeping area, where you can keep an eye on your grandchild.
- Place the baby on its back to sleep.
- The floor is safest because you do not have to worry about the baby falling or rolling off an adult bed, waterbed, day bed, chair or sofa.
- It can be dangerous, even deadly for an adult or another child to sleep in the same bed with a baby. Avoid co-sleeping.

For toddlers who sleep in a bed:

- Make sure the bed is an adult's arm length away from the wall and that the bed has guardrails on both sides. This is to prevent suffocation as well as falls out of the bed.

Grandchildren in the car:

- North Carolina law requires all children under age 8 AND 80 pounds to be secured in a weight appropriate child restraint system (child safety seat or booster seat).
- Infants and toddlers up to 2 years of age should ride rear-facing .*
- Children who have outgrown the seat rear-facing, should use a forward facing seat with a full harness up until they reach the maximum height or weight for that seat.*
- Children who have outgrown a forward-facing seat with harness should use a belt positioning booster seat until the adult belt fits correctly which is typically between ages 8-12 years or when the child has reached 4ft. 9in. tall.*
- All children under age 13 should ride in the backseat.*
- All passengers regardless of age and seating position should be restrained correctly, according to age and weight, in either a child safety seat, booster seat or seat belt.
- **Never** put a child under age 13 in the front seat if you have a passenger side air bag that cannot be turned off.
- If you need to change, feed or take care of other personal needs for your grandchild, please pull off the road to a safe place and turn off the automobile.
- Talking on a cell phone or texting while driving is not safe and should be avoided.

*American Academy of Pediatrics recommendations (1 April 2011)

This fact sheet was created by the Guilford County Department of Public Health for the Guilford County Child Fatality Prevention Team.

PEC APP 05/10
Revised 01/13